



KAT:

THE GERMAN GAME
OF CARDS.

*Inscribed to all who love to
trump their partner's tricks.*

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NEW YORK :
B. WESTERMANN & CO.

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By Ernst
Edward
Samuel

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"SKAT"

REVIEWED, BY WAY OF A

PREFACE.

(From the "*N. Y. Nation*," Nov. 4, 1886.)

Skat: the German Game of Cards. B. Westermann & Co.

At Coblenz, where the Moselle River empties into the Rhine, the yellow floods of the tributary are for miles distinguishable from the blue-green waters of the "coupe des nations," as Lamartine calls the German river. Similarly, German social life, with its pastimes and characteristics, remains a distinct feature in this cosmopolitan City of New York, into which the stream of immigration empties its floods of Germans year after year. They become Americans soon enough, politically, commercially, industrially; and Karl, Heinrich, and Hans are Charley, Harry and John, before they have mastered the language into which they are so eager to translate their names. But the best of them, the well-educated and gentlemanly, with no anarchist bent or other disqualification, do not *socially* enter into the American life, as a rule, for a generation. Neither do Americans take cognizance of the real social characteristics of their new brethren in politics. Of course, the well-to-do

of both nationalities meet on a footing of social equality at receptions, parties, and balls; but who finds social pleasure where there is as little occasion for asserting one's individuality as there is elbow-room? A large number of Americans attend the Lieder-kranz balls and can be met at the homes of wealthy Germans. But these, in a great measure, have long ago divested themselves of the really characteristic home *agréments* of the Fatherland, and care little to do missionary work in opening up to Americans a vista of the hearth pleasures and the intimate social life of the German household. Indubitably the German *Gemüth* does lend a charm to the enjoyment of life in the home circle, for there can be nothing more thoroughly enjoyable than a German *Polterabend*, Sylvester-night amusements, and the *Julkclapp* at the Christmas tree—which latter, as well as Moltke, has conquered even the hereditary enemy. We do not, of course, refer to the loud-mouthed *Gemüthlichkeit* of the ordinary and extraordinary *Kneipgenie*, which the average American is too apt to consider the characteristic of the German.

The late Friederich Kapp, indeed, was inclined to advise his countrymen to shuffle off as soon as possible the German coil, and become Americans on landing here. One may be allowed to think, however, that the flavor of foreignness which an educated German diffuses in American homes is far from disagreeable to equally well-bred Americans, and that meeting as social peers, either should assimilate what is best in the other—that the yellow Moselle should merge in the blue Rhine, and *vice versa*—because nobody is so perfect, individual or nation, as not to find something worth learning from another. If, as Goethe maintained, mastering a foreign language doubles one's individuality, how much more valuable would be the full knowledge of another *Volksseele*, as it manifests itself in its most intimate social life.

To come to our point, the card game of Skat is a feature of great magnitude in German social life, at the fire-side, and in the *Stammkneipe*, in whose dingy circumference his Excellency, the Privy Councillor; the Professor of Pehlevi; the general of the Army and the merchant prince, as well as the *dii minorum gentium*,

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meet at their *Stammtisch* for a game of Skat. While this country is given up to lawn-tennis and other English sports, the great German community have so far not exerted themselves to bring their favorite pastime before the Americans, and the little pamphlet whose title we give above, is, we believe, the first attempt in this direction, and, consequently, possesses greater importance and significance than its slender size would betoken. Skat is a power in German life. Even Wilhelmine Buchholz became one of its devotees at the first sitting, albeit in the uncongenial company of her son-in-law and his doctor friend, who explained its principles to her, withholding, however, as she asserts, the best tricks and slyest devices for their own advantage. But winning a Grando without four Matadors sweetens for her the dire confession that the card devil had secured a new victim.

(From the "*Brooklyn Neue Freie Presse*.")

—TRANSLATION—

(After referring to a Skat Congress held at Brooklyn):

It is hardly necessary to assert that this event will leave its mark on the history of civilization.

In Germany *Imperial Skat* (Reichs-Skat) is now the order of the day; it must soon be *Universal Skat* (Welt-Skat), as the four Jacks are certain to conquer the world. A national association is now engaged in propagating this interesting game in America, in which endeavor a Skat-book in the English language, published by *B. Westermann & Co.*, New York, will prove a substantial help. Compiled from German sources, it is an excellent guide for learning how to play Skat. The translation into English of the technical Skat-terms is amusing: *Die Vorhand wird gereizt*—is driven, bid up, irritated. *Auf die Dörfer gehen* is well hit by: *visiting the hamlets*. *Bimmeln* is rendered by *dumping*. The compiler, however, slips up on the classical *Mauern*, for which he finds nothing better than: *to be overcareful*, a rendering devoid of power and pith.*

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Indubitably, the little Skat-book will have its share in making Americans admirers of the four Jacks, and when once German-Americans and Anglo-Americans begin fleecing each other at the Skatable, the last obstacle to a full harmony between the two elements of population, dwelling together in the United States, must have been finally and forever removed.

*The author of "*SKAT, The German Game of Cards*," now suggests "*to block*" for *mauern*, and at some future occasion will endeavor to do fuller justice to this part of his task which he considers quite as important, namely: with the game itself to present such social traits of his German countrymen as manifest themselves in the peculiar Skat-terminology in an English garb as piquant and pithy as he can give, and at the same time to enable American players, when joining a party of Germans, to master as much of the Skat-jargon as seems absolutely necessary to become Skat-players in full standing. Not the least part of the social enjoyment the German game affords, consists in the peculiar way of putting things and a skat-book not doing justice to its humor would be falling short of realizing the author's final aim, touched upon at some length in the notice of his little book, reprinted from the *N. Y. Nation*: to teach his American-born brethren not the game only, but something better worth knowing of things German than a game at cards merely, however interesting as such.

ERNST LEMCKE.

Astoria, N. Y., November 10th, 1886.

ERRATA:

Page 5, 15th line, read: development.

Page 15, 12th line, read: bids a Grando with or without one Matador.

Page 22, 1st line, read: It is immaterial what 3d hand holds. Since 2d hand offered as high a game as Solo in spades, player must . . . etc.

Page 22, 6th line from bottom, read: differently by leading first Ace and Ten of hearts.

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SKAT.*

THE GERMAN GAME OF CARDS.

SOME recent experience in introducing this, as it may well be called, the *national* game of cards of the Germans to American friends has proven beyond a doubt that its popularity in Germany to the almost entire exclusion of Whist, L'hombre, Boston and all other card games, is not undeserved. The writer's friends took hold of it eagerly, mastered the apparent difficulties, when properly explained, very readily and after a few trials became great lovers of it. For it really is a most wonderful and interesting conception, wrought out with a surprising consequential application of its fundamental principle, affording greater variety and more possibilities in bringing out to the best advantage the individuality of each player, not hampered by an uncongenial partner, and in keeping the interest of those engaged in it longer

*) Pronounce the a as in father.

sustained than any other game of cards. Its devotees would scorn an invitation to a rubber of Whist, of which they think no better than a chess player does of dominoes. A congress of Skat players recently held at Altenburg, Saxony, the home of the game, has brought the noble pastime still more prominently before the public, so that the time seems propitious for introducing it to Americans more generally than can be done by individual players among a limited number of friends. With this object in view the following sketch has been compiled, in great part from the excellent German treatise "*Illustrirtes Skatbuch*" (by A. Hertefeld) Breslau, 1885, in which the game has been, so to say, codified, the rules there laid down now being more generally accepted than heretofore, local and individual deviations becoming more and more merged into the "*Reichs-Skat*."

Skat is of quite recent origin, shrouded already in myths. It is certain that it was first played by the farmers of the romantic country around the Wartburg. It bears a great resemblance to the Wendish game of "*Schafskopf*" (Sheepshead) and "*Dreibein*" (three legs). A Wendisch coachman, it is related, taught his employer, who in turn initiated a party of Taroc players among whom one F. F. Hempel, a lawyer, took a prominent part in developing and settling the rules now governing the game. A party of students, on a pedestrian tour through

Thuringia, there learned and transplanted it on the fruitful soil of their *alma mater*, whence it finally was spread over the fatherland and wherever Germans went, and can now, probably, be found eagerly played in the African colonies of Germany, the Sandwich Islands or, in fact, the world over where three Germans meet. It is hardly more than sixty years old.

The name of *Skat* has been variously explained etymologically. Some will derive it from Gothic *Skatts*, Anglo-Saxon *Skatt*, the modern German *Schatz* (treasure), because two cards are put aside, being a treasure for one of the players. More plausible, though less learned and poetical is the derivation or corruption from *Schafskopf* or perhaps, as Taroc certainly had a great influence on the development of Skat, from "*Scart*," one of the terms used in Taroc, a game of Italian origin, *Scart* from *Scartare*, meaning: to discard, an important feature in Skat. *Matador* is likewise a term used in Skat and taken from Taroc.

THE PRINCIPLES OF SKAT: Three or more persons can play Skat; three, however, are active only in each game, the others being "*im Skat*," discarded for the time till their turn comes. One hand plays the game against the other two and is "*the player*," the other two playing jointly in opposition to him as partners.

Skat is a game of *points*, not tricks. Two tricks may

win, and eight may lose the game. The cards have a point value different from their trumping power. The game is played with a pack of piquet cards, 32, from the Seven up; in Germany mostly with the peculiar "*Deutsche Karte*" of odd and more often ugly than handsome design.

The Jacks or Knaves, called "*Wenzel*," which seems to confirm the Wendisch origin of the game, "*Bauern*" (Knaves), "*Jungen*" (boys), are the highest trumping cards, no matter which suit is made trumps, except in Nullo.

Every player holds ten cards, two are laid aside "*in the Skat*." The use made of these two cards, called "the Skat," determines the two different styles of playing : with the Skat (simple game and Tourné), or : without the Skat (Solo, Nullo, Grando).

Playing *with* the Skat : The "*player*" has the right to take these two cards and to discard two others which he can best spare, before beginning the game. *Without* the Skat : The "*player*," without taking the Skat, plays with the ten cards dealt to him, the two cards in the Skat, however, or the points they contain, being added to his score.

The four suits are of graded value, clubs being the best, spades second, hearts third and diamonds fourth or lowest. The trumping power of the Jacks is in the same sequence, Jack of clubs *always* highest, Jack of diamonds lowest.

The privilege of *playing the game* is bid for at the beginning of each game. Whoever offers to play in a better suit than all others, according to the order named, secures this privilege, and must score, of the 120 points represented by all the counting cards, one more than half, 61 points at least. With 60 points only, he loses ; with 30 points he is "*Schneider*" or "*geschnitten*" (cut) ; with no count at all, he is "*Schwarz*" (black=whitewashed). Consequently the two hands in opposition to the "player," scoring jointly 60 points, win the game from player ; scoring 30 are out of *Schneider*, but are *Schwarz* with no count.

In order to find out who can play the game in a better suit than any other hand, the first hand, to the dealer's left, is driven or bid up ("*wird gereizt*," literally : is irritated) by second hand, or if the latter is unable or unwilling to offer a game, by third hand. The successful bidder becomes the *player* ; winning, he is paid the cost of the game by all hands, active and inactive ; losing, he pays all hands.

The number of possible combinations is exceedingly great. It has been computed that a party playing since the day of creation could not have exhausted them all. Hardly ever at one sitting will two games run alike. One single card in a different hand may turn the chances. Few games, very rarely dealt, are absolutely secure ; some

lucky accident may win the weakest, or ruin the strongest hand. In Solo games the uncertainty about the trumping and counting value of the two cards in the Skat adds much to the possibilities for either side.

Skat is a decidedly German game, though the outcome of a Slavonic-Italo-German alliance and is therefore, as stated, played with German cards. There is nothing, however, to prevent the ordinary French or Whist card being used. This is, in fact, done to a great extent, wherever German cards are unobtainable. The German card is as follows: "*Eicheln*" or "*Eckern*" (acorn) = clubs; "*Grün*" (green) = spades; "*Roth*" (red) = hearts; "*Schellen*" (bells) = diamonds. The point value of the cards of each suit is: Jacks = 2, Aces = 11, Tens = 10, Kings = 4, Queens = 3, or four times 30 = 120 points. Nines, Eights, Sevens do not count (Ladons). The Jacks, though highest trumps, count two points only in scoring; very properly so, according to the philosophy of the game. They enable the player to draw trumps without risking many points, the big point cards, Ace and Ten, remaining in reserve to be played after the Jacks are out of harm's way.

The graded value of the four suits has been stated; the hand, therefore, having a game with hearts for trumps, outbids the opponent who has diamonds. The Jacks are in the same sequence subordinated to each

other and are the *four best trumps in all games*, except Nullo, no matter which suit is made trumps. Hence there are really seven cards only to each suit, the Jacks being, so to say, a suit by themselves, changing in each game to the trump suit and making trumps a suit of eleven cards. Three times seven = twenty-one and eleven = 32 cards. The Jacks should, therefore, always be ranged by themselves in the players' hands, not with the suit of which they are taken, and after trumps are declared, be put with the trump suit. This will save beginners many serious mistakes.

All trump cards, as far as they form an unbroken sequence in the "*player's*" hand, from Jack of clubs down, are called "*Matadors*" and are of importance in computing the cost of each game. The two cards in the Skat being considered the player's, he may, therefore, hold eleven matadors, ten in his hand and one in the Skat or nine in his hand and two in the Skat. This would add eleven rates to the value of the game he plays. This sequence of Matadors counts only so far as it is unbroken. Player holding, for instance, eight trumps, 1st, 2d, 4th Jack, Ace, Ten, King, Queen, Nine, plays *with two* matadors only, the sequence being broken by the absence of 3d Jack. If he held this 3d Jack also, his would be a game *with nine* matadors. The great puzzle for beginners in computing the cost of a game comes from the peculiar fact that

an unbroken sequence of matadors *held*, just as well as an unbroken sequence of matadors *not held* by player, is counted in determining the cost of each game. Thus with 2d, 3d, 4th Jack, Ace, Ten, King, Queen, Eight, player has a game *without one* matador; the same hand with 3d and 4th Jack would be *without two*; or a hand with Seven of trumps only, *without ten*; or a Solo hand with Ace, Ten, and all lower trumps but no Jacks, a game *without four*, a high game; when finished, however, and the Skat is turned up, where the 2d Jack is found, it is *without one* only, worth much less.

PLAYING THE GAME: The cards are well shuffled and cut. The first dealer is determined by dealing one card to each player until a Jack is on the table. The party receiving it deals the first round, five cards to each of the three active hands — if four play, the dealer remains inactive — then two cards “*in the Skat*,” and again five to each player. The party to the dealer’s left receiving the first cards, is “*Vorhand*” (first hand); the next second or middle hand; the last third hand (dealer, when three only play). After sorting the cards, suits together, in the order of the cards which, Nullo excepted, always is: Ace, Ten, King, Queen, Nine, Eight Seven, — Jacks by themselves — second hand begins the driving, offering a game to first hand, not necessarily in his best suit or the one he finally intends to make trumps, so as not to dis-

close his cards or prevent his playing in a better suit, if the cards found in the Skat warrant it. Supposing first hand passes when second hand offers a game in hearts, while he really intends to play in spades ; on taking the Skat, he finds that he can win in clubs, a still better game than spades. His having offered hearts does not prevent his playing any higher game but precludes his making trumps any suit inferior to the one he has committed himself to in his bidding. He could not, in this instance, make diamonds trumps after taking the Skat, because he has offered hearts. If second hand holds no cards to warrant his bidding for the game, third hand does so ; if third hand also passes, first hand becomes "*the player*," or may likewise pass, when he deals a fresh game. If two equally high games are bid, first hand has a better chance than second or third, and second than third.

These being so far all *simple games*, second hand may wish to go further than simple game in clubs and may offer as the next higher : Tourné (turn up), which means that the successful bidder turns up one of the two Skat cards, showing it ; whatever suit this card happens to be, must be made trumps, whether welcome to the player or not. This is rather hazardous, as player may turn up a suit of which he holds not a single card. He also takes the second Skat card, without showing it, discards two and plays the game in the suit which chance has made trumps.

Tourné is outbid by Solo in any suit, the suits again in their regular order. Solo in spades must yield to Nullo and Club Solo ranks higher than Nullo ; Grando beats Club Solo. The order of the games is later on given in tabulated form.

Supposing second hand to be the successful bidder with Solo in clubs. First and third hand play against him. First hand always has the first lead. Every hand must follow suit under all circumstances as long as he can. Nobody is obliged to trump, but may as often as he is unable to follow suit. Player's object now is to secure 61 points, or more, by getting in his tricks as many high counting cards as possible. The object of first and third hands jointly is to prevent this. Two tricks of one Ace and two Tens each, footing up 62 points, are sufficient to win or lose the game. Player, 2d hand holds :



1st Hand :



3d Hand :



In the Skat:



First hand leads Ace of spades; player follows suit with Ten of spades; third hand, out of spades, trumps with Ace of clubs, though the trick is his partner's. (1st trick, against player: $11 + 10 + 11 = 32$ points). Third hand thereby secures the eleven points of Ace of trumps, which otherwise he would be compelled to play into player's trick as soon as the latter played a Jack. Third hand, having taken, now has the lead. He plays Ace of diamonds. First hand trumps with Ten of clubs, player must follow suit with unguarded Ten of diamonds (2d trick, against player: $11 + 10 + 10 = 31$). Player loses the game in two tricks = 63 points, although holding eight trumps (a ninth in the Skat) and making every trick left. Two bad cards ("*Fehlkarten*") lost him a Solo game in clubs, rate of game 12; to which add: with *four* mators (4 times $12 = 48$), total 60 points or chips, which amount he pays to each hand at the table. Had player with the above card been first hand, having the first lead, his game could under no circumstances have been lost. Having drawn out with a Jack, Ace and Ten of Trumps, and continued playing trumps in the expectation that one of the dangerous Aces might be thrown in his tricks,

or that failing, played Ten of spades, taken by Ace and third hand *dumping* ("wimmeln") Ace of diamonds, so as to make the trick count 32, then player's Ten of diamonds would have been a good card, his opponents would have 32 points only, losing the game but saving *Schneider*: Or player leading Ten of diamonds, next hand dumping Ace of hearts and third hand taking with Ace of diamonds, third hand would lead, in turn, King of diamonds, player throws away Ten of spades, next hand dumps Ace of spades, a trick of 25 points, added to 32 points in the previous trick, would make 57 points only against him, while he would win with 63 points.

Nullo is a game, ranging between Solo in spades and Solo in clubs. Its object as well as mode of playing are ungermane to the general principles of Skat; it is apparently an afterthought to afford an unusually poor hand a chance for turning bad luck to some account. The *player* must make no tricks at all. The cards in *Nullo*, and in *Nullo only*, are as in Whist: Ace, King, Queen, Jack, Ten, Nine, Eight, Seven. There are no trumps, and the Jacks take their places in their own suits. A single trick, taken by player, loses him the game and immediately finishes it.

Grando, on the other hand, is a Solo with this difference that the four Jacks only are trumps. The player must make 61 points, at least, and the game is played accord-

ing to the general rules. As a Jack played in any other game calls for trumps, in Grando Jack calls for Jacks. Grando outbids Solo in clubs.

In playing *Tourné*, the hand turning up a Seven may, before taking up the second card, play Nullo instead of the suit to which the Seven belongs, whichever suits his hand best. The same, on turning up a Jack, he may either make the suit of the Jack trumps or play Grando, in either case giving his decision before looking at the second card in the Skat.

Nullo may also be played *open* and if so announced outbids a Grando with less, or more than, one matador (Jacks, as in Grando the Jacks only are matadors). After the first trick player lays his hand open on the table, and his two opponents, without seeing each other's hands, may try to force his taking a trick.

The most difficult part of the game is correctly to judge a hand dealt with a view of playing the most valuable game that can safely be expected to be won. To offer a high game with little or no chance of winning is as wrong a principle as playing a game inferior to what the hand can be made to yield. Experience alone can teach how to avoid either.

THE ORDER AND VALUATION OF GAMES :

Player taking up the two Skat cards.	{	Simple Game, Diamonds,	Rate or Cost	1
		“ Hearts,	“	2
		“ Spades,	“	3
		“ Clubs,	“	4
		Tourné, Diamonds,	“	5
		“ Hearts,	“	6
		“ Spades,	“	7
		“ Clubs,	“	8
The Skat not being taken up during the game, its points counting for player all the same.	{	Solo, Diamonds,	“	9
		“ Hearts,	“	10
		“ Spades,	“	11
		(Nullo 20)		
		“ Clubs,	“	12
		“ Grando,	“	16
		(Nullo open 40)		
		Grando, <i>with or without</i> two or more Jacks, (rate 16, but must at least cost 48, hence higher than Nullo open.)		

These rates are the first cost of the game played by the successful bidder and are reckoned in computing the cost of each game : *a*) once for the game ; *b*) as many times more as the player's hand held, or lacked matadors (possibly eleven times under *b*) ; *c*) as many times more as player made his opponents Schneider (1) ; Schwarz (1) ; or in Solo games gave notice before playing the first card that he would make them Schneider (1) or Schwarz (1) or both (possibly four rates under *c*) ; in all

at most 16 rates under *a*, *b*, *c*. The *announcement* of *Schneider* is good for two rates, as *Schneider* is paid one rate, even if not announced. Hence an announced *Schwarz* includes *Schneider* (1); its announcement (1); *Schwarz* (1); its announcement (1); or four rates in all.

Thus, a simple game in Hearts, with three matadors, player scoring 91 points, is worth: Game 1; three matadors 3; *Schneider* 1; or five times 2, the rate of this game = 10 chips which player receives from each hand.

Or: a Tourné in Spades, player holding 3d and 4th Jacks, scoring only 30 points, loses: Game 1; without two matadors 2; *Schneider* 1; four times seven = 28 chips.

Or: a Solo in clubs, player holding 1st and 4th Jacks, wins with 61 points: Game 1; with one matador 1; or twice the rate of 12 = 24 chips.

Or: a Grando with 2d, 3d, 4th Jacks and announcing *Schneider*, making every trick, the 1st Jack being in the Skat: Game 1; four matadors 4; *Schneider* 1; *Schwarz* 1; *Schneider* announced 1; eight times 16 = 128 chips from every hand.

A club Solo with eleven matadors, which, of course, could announce *Schneider* and *Schwarz*, unless indeed the eleventh matador in the Skat were the best Jack, would be the highest possible game: $1+11+4 = 16$ times 12 = 196 chips from each player, a game which probably few players ever actually held.

All other games, lost or won, can be readily computed according to these models, taking the game always as one rate ; with (or without) so many matadors = x ; Schneider, Schwarz, announcement of either, so many more rates = y ; hence, $1+x+y = z$, multiplied by the rate of the game in the above table.

Nullo and open Nullo are sometimes valued 15 or 16 and 30 or 32 respectively, a matter of special agreement between players.

HINTS FOR PLAYERS : The following hand, for instance, would to many seem a doubtful Solo, on account of the four "*Fehlkarten*" which cannot possibly be made to yield for the player's score a single point.



As a Grando, it would appear suicidal to an inexperienced player and yet, provided *Player is first hand and has the lead*, it is a Grando which cannot possibly be lost, no matter how the other cards are distributed. Player makes 6 tricks, drawing the 3d and 4th Jacks and playing his Aces and Tens. He gets from his opponents twelve cards and the two cards in the Skat, 14 cards. As there are only 12 Ladons (cards of no counting value) of which he holds himself four, six cards must be played into his tricks of some counting value. These six cards must be :

2 Jacks = 4 points ; at least 4 Queens = 12 points, total 16 points. His own hand yields him : 2 Jacks = 4 ; 2 Aces = 22 ; 2 Tens = 20 ; total 46 with above 16 points = 62, sufficient to win the game, a Grando with two, 3 times 16 = 48 chips. Quite different would be the result, if player held one single Queen among his "Fehl-karten," say Queen of hearts instead of Eight. He would get 9 cards of no value in his tricks and lose the game with 59 points.

First hand most always has the best chance in Skat, as the first lead often is instrumental in winning a game which 2d or 3d hand must necessarily lose, as appears from the game described on page 13.

The discarding in simple and Tourné games should be done carefully. Aside from the advantage of seeing 12 cards against his opponents' ten each, the player should try so to discard as to get his strong suit in a good firm sequence and rid his hand of one suit entirely to trump high cards. It is advisable to discard high counting cards, unless they are reasonably certain of making tricks in the run of the game. Even Ace and Ten of trumps are sometimes safer when discarded, their 21 points swelling the player's score just as well, if it becomes certain that the opponents can draw them out with Jacks. The following hand, for instance,



playing Tourné, turns up Ace of diamonds (diamonds trumps) and King of hearts. He discards both Ace and Ten of diamonds, trusting to score 40 more points with his leading cards. Keeping Ace and Ten of trumps, he could not help losing them both if the other three Jacks and Eight or any other trump were in one hand against him. Ace and Ten of a long suit, not trumps, should also be discarded when King and Queen are also held as the latter are good if Ace and Ten are not in the game. Unguarded Ten should always be discarded.

When first hand plays the game, trumps should be led. The leading cards of other suits are good only after trumps are out. Even if weak in trumps, player should lead them to hide his weakness. If player has to rely on his leading cards exclusively and holds none or very few trumps, he may try to score his 61 points by playing out his Aces and Tens (*"auf die Dörfer gehen,"* visiting the hamlets).

Leading and playing the game, one against two, is in itself a double advantage. Player can make his play aggressive and knows exactly how many trumps his two opponents hold. When 2d or 3d hand plays the game, it becomes the player's first object to secure the lead.

The two hands in opposition have the hardest task. They know their own hand only and yet must try to act in unison. As there are really few games that cannot be broken by good play, their task is very interesting and should from the first be to break the player's trump force, not by leading trumps, however, which is advisable only when player is *very* weak in trumps. They must further try to get player between them, or prevent his being 3d hand. Player thus placed in the middle, 3d hand, playing after him, has a chance to dump ("*wimmeln*") cards of high value into every trick which player has not taken. All hands should always count the points in their tricks. An Ace or even King at a critical moment dumped in a trick may win a game which, that last chance lost, may be beyond recovery.

In Solo games the opposition should lead as many Aces as they hold, changing suit with every trick, as player has had no chance to discard.

The following game may serve as illustrating how many things a wide-awake player has to take into consideration and how his play should be accommodated to circumstances, disclosed by the driving.

Player is first hand. 2d hand has driven him up to Solo in spades. First hand announces a Grando with this hand:



2d Hand:



It is immaterial what 3d hand holds, since 2d hand offered as high a game as Solo in spades. Player must surmise that both Jacks and a strong suit are in 2d hand. If he loses sight of this and plays either Jack, 2d hand takes with the next higher, draws the other Jack from player, leads spades seven times and player, not knowing what cards toward the last to throw away, and obliged to hold an Ace of a short suit, keeps Ace of diamonds. 2d hand plays Eight of hearts last, and player loses every trick and is made Schwarz. Cost of Game : Grando without one, Schneider and Schwarz, 4 times 16 = 64 chips. But bearing in mind the fact that 2d hand is strong, an experienced player will manage differently by leading first Ace of hearts. 2d hand trumps with Jack of hearts and whether playing his spades or best Jack, player will keep one Jack to take the lead again and may possibly make his opponents Schneider, or if all goes against him, lose some 30 points, but win his game.

Another game: Second hand gets the game with



and makes it diamond Solo ; there being only Ace, Ten and Nine of trumps in his opponents' hands, he announces Schneider, being too careful to jeopardize a high game by announcing Schwarz. He not only loses Schneider, but does not even score 61 points, though 14 points in the Skat count for him, because 1st hand having Ten of spades fourth, plays it, 2d hand follows with Ace, 3d hand trumps with Ace of diamonds ; plays Ten of clubs, 1st hand trumps with Ten of diamonds and player follows with Ace of clubs. 64 points scored by the opposition ; player loses: Game 1 with 4 matadors, Schneider 1, Schneider announced 1 or 7 times $9 = 63$ chips. Played as a Grando his hand would have been good.

The cost of the games is best paid in chips after each round. The chips generally in use are \square one, \bigcirc five, \square twenty. Otherwise each player is credited or debited with the amount of each game won or lost and the balance struck at the end.

Skat is a jolly and lively game, passing off quickly and full of surprises. The driving gives much occasion for wit and good humor. A player turning up the trump

card in Tourne, will rarely fail to say with one of the genial captains of the ocean steamers : I will risk it even if forever hereafter I should have to drink water, or some similar remark. "*Mauern*" (to be overcareful), "*Wimmeln*" (dumping) are very expressive. "*The old boy*" (best Jack), "*the little one*" (fourth Jack) and the altogether ridiculous terminology of Beer-Skat deserve a chapter by themselves, as this species is mostly cultivated by students who impart to it all the buoyant spirits for which they are famous. It is a democratic game, too, and is said to have long been despised in court circles because in it a "*Bauer*" (Knave) is better than a King.

The following story, whether true or *ben trovato*, may fitly conclude this sketch. The professor enters the lecture room where he finds one single student. He gruffly asks whether it may not be best to dismiss the class for that day. Well, says Bruder Studio, I tell you what; let us wait a little, perhaps another fellow will show up and we can have a little Skat.

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